

**RESTORATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)
PROJECT FACT SHEET
OCTOBER 1994**

**HNC REVISION: 20 MAY 1997
TAG REVIEW DATE: 24 JUNE 1997**

1. SITE NAME: Martha's Vineyard Naval Auxiliary Air
Station

SITE NUMBER: D01MA048800

LOCATION:

City: West Tisbury
County: Dukes
State: Massachusetts

PROJECT NUMBER: D01MA048802

CATEGORY: OE

INPR RAC: 2

ASR RAC: 3

TAG RAC: 5

2. POC's:

TECHNICAL MANAGER:

Name: Richard L. Pike
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GEO DISTRICT POC:

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Office: Not Applicable
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HEADQUARTERS POC:

Name: J. R. Gibson
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SUPPORT DISTRICT (ASR) POC:

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ASR TAG REVIEW POC:

Name: Thomas M. Meekma
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3. SITE DESCRIPTION: The former Martha's Vineyard NAAS consisted of 685.912 acres of land located approximately at the center of the island of Martha's Vineyard, Dukes County, Massachusetts, almost completely surrounded by the Manuel E.

Correllus State Forest, 5 miles west of Edgartown and 5 miles south of Tisbury. The Edgartown-West Tisbury Road, which provides access to the present day airport, defines the southern border of the site. Airport Road, which cuts through the midpoint of the State Forest, is at the eastern boundary. Two unimproved fire access roads are at the western and northern borders of the site, which is square shaped, with approximately one mile per side.

The owner is Dukes County which utilizes the site as the island's sole commercial airport. Much of the land is undeveloped and serves as a buffer between the noise of aircraft operations and the surrounding State Forest. There is an administrative area southeast of the main runway which contains a number of structures, most of which date from the time the airport was a NAAS. Some of these structures are in use while others are empty and in various states of disrepair. A fence surrounds most of the site and there are "No Trespassing" signs posted along the entire perimeter and at all access points.

The climate is relatively mild for the northern location due primarily to the influence of the nearby Gulf stream. Martha's Vineyard is the largest island in New England and is 23 miles long and 9 miles wide at its furthest points with a total land area of 100 square miles. The island is in the Atlantic Ocean, five miles west of Cape Cod, Massachusetts. The site is located on an extensive plain that is about 100 feet above sea level along its northern edge and that slopes gently southward until it is only 5 to 10 feet above sea level along the southern shore. The terrain is relatively flat and overgrown with trees and bushes except for those areas which have been cleared for runways, buildings, roads, and parking lots. Undergrowth in some areas is rather dense. There is no surface water within the site area. A natural gully near the east boundary of the property provides a runoff area.

4. SITE HISTORY: Between 1944 and 1948, the United States Navy acquired approximately 685.912 acres by condemnation for construction of the former Martha's Vineyard Naval Auxiliary Air Station (NAAS), an auxiliary field for Quonset Point Naval Air Station in Rhode Island. The area consisted of 683 acres fee and 2.912 acres easement. The Navy built approximately 38 buildings in 1942-43, which included magazines and an aircraft machine gun range. The NAAS, known as a Naval Auxiliary Air Facility (NAAF) prior to 1945, was built to support the final phase of training for naval aviators and air crews prior to their deployment to aircraft carriers in the Pacific theater. Thousands of men received six weeks of intensive training that covered navigation, target practice, night air combat, recognition of ships and planes, and simulated night carrier landings and takeoffs.

The base was placed in caretaker status on 1 May 1946 and leased to Dukes County for use as a commercial airport. File correspondence suggests that on 21 June 1946, the Navy Department, by means of a revocable permit, granted to Dukes County the right to use the deactivated NAAS as a commercial airport. Two other revocable permits, dated 23 January 1947 and 19 March 1947, allowed the County of Dukes to use personal property at the site. The Navy reported the airport excess on 18 October 1957. On 27 August 1959, the General Services Administration transferred by deed 683 acres fee and 2.9 acres easement, together with the improvements, to Dukes County.

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

AREA A

Size, Acres:	16 (approximately)
Former Use:	Ammunition/Ordnance Storage Area
Present Use:	Airport property-Not used
Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	None
Type:	Not Applicable

AREA B

Size, Acres:	8 (approximately)
Former Use:	Aircraft Machine Gun Range
Present Use:	Airport property-Not used
Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	None
Type:	Not Applicable

AREA C

Size, Acres:	8 (approximately)
Former Use:	Pistol Range
Present Use:	Airport property-Not used
Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	None
Type:	Not Applicable

AREA D

Size, Acres:	45 (approximately)
Former Use:	Skeet Field
Present Use:	Airport property-Not used

Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	None
Type:	Not Applicable

AREA E

Size, Acres:	608 (approximately)
Former Use:	Aircraft Operations and Administrative Area
Present Use:	Same
Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	None
Type:	Not Applicable

6. CURRENT STATUS: The Archives Search Report for Martha's Vineyard Naval Auxiliary Air Station was completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, in October 1994.

7. STRATEGY: Entire site: NOFA; (RAC 5)

8. ISSUES AND CONCERNS: The CEHNC Technical Advisory Group (TAG) recommended a strategy of no further action (NOFA), RAC 5 for all areas of this site. A revised RAC form is attached.

a. **Areas A-D:** Nothing was found during the site visit and there is no record of any ordnance and explosives (OE) finds. In Area A, the ammunition storage structures were removed in a USACE BD/DR project in 1993 and included a sweep of the surrounding area for OE presence. Unexpended ordnance remaining at the time of site closure was loaded on trucks, taken to the local port, loaded on barges, and shipped to Quonset Point NAS. The 30 foot high mound of earth used as a backstop at the Aircraft Machine Gun Range in Area B was removed in 1959. Area C, the pistol range, was removed in 1945-46. Only 12-gauge shotguns were fired in Area D.

b. **Area E:** One person stated that a "live bomb" was found. This report could not be confirmed by any other source, i.e., other knowledgeable persons, newspaper articles, EOD. There are no other confirmed reports of OE finds at the site. Even if this OE was found, it could be considered an isolated event. It is implausible that bombs exist subsurface at the site. People who were at the base when it was active were interviewed and stated that there were no stories or rumors concerning the unauthorized expenditure or disposal of OE on post. The author also stated that flares and practice bombs could have been accidentally dropped on the site as a normal part of the training process. While the ASR does contain historical newspaper articles documenting accidental drops of practice bombs and flares at various locations on the island, including the forest surrounding

the base, there is no documentation of any such accidents occurring on the base proper. There is also no record of airplane crashes on the base where OE would have been released on site. It is more likely that if any such incident occurred at the base, somebody would have seen it and any OE would have been retrieved.

Natural Resources: Known Federally- and State-listed species occur within the site area and are listed in Table 3-2, page 7 of the ASR Findings. An on-site inspection by appropriate State and Federal personnel may be necessary to verify the presence, absence or location of listed species, or natural communities.

9. SCHEDULE SUMMARY: NOFA

10. FUNDING/BUDGET SUMMARY: NA NOFA